

4501

IN CONFIDENCE

HEAT TREATED FACTOR VIII

CMO will wish to know that there is some hearsay evidence that haemophilic patients are seroconverting to become anti HTLV III positive despite being given heat treated Factor VIII.

This could be because:-

1. They have seroconverted some months after having received a non-treated product (the use of heat treated Factor VIII only became common at the beginning of 1985)
2. Certain heat treated products are not being subjected to sufficient inactivation. There is considerable variation between the methods used by the commercial firms and in particular the Protein Fractionation Laboratory in Liberton in Scotland introduced on a short term basis a very quick method which they thought might inactivate the virus, at the beginning of this year. I believe that it is this latter which may be implicated in the information I have received.

The Blood Products Laboratory at Elstree were rather late starters in heat treating their Factor VIII but are probably now producing the safest product in the world. There is good evidence that the prolonged and high temperature treatment, is inactivating the non-A non-B agent. It has been apparent for some time that commercial heat treated Factor VIII does not inactivate this agent.

Whether or not the heat treated product is transmitting HTLV III will take some time to disentangle. We have scrupulously observed in all our answers to PQs that heat treatment should inactivate HTLV III. This note is just to emphasise the need for continuing to do so.

28 November 1985

MED SEB

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